



As adopted by the Governors of North Ridge High School.

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NORTH RIDGE HIGH SPECIALIST SUPPORT SCHOOL

Policy on Teaching and Learning

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Under the public sector equality duty, all schools/academies must have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010; to advance equality of opportunity between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it and to foster good relations across all protected characteristics. This means schools/academies must take into account equality considerations when policies are being developed, adopted and implemented.

This policy should be read in conjunction with other school policies and guidance provided. This includes: behaviour policies and guidance, guidance for teachers on lesson observations, monitoring and evaluation policy, school development plan and home school contract.

1 Introduction

1.1 At North Ridge, we believe in the concept that every minute a child spends in school should be an opportunity to learn, and in the idea that both adults and pupils learn new things every day. Teaching and learning is the core business of North Ridge. We maintain that learning should be a rewarding and enjoyable experience for everyone. Through our teaching, we equip pupils with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to be able to make informed choices about the important things in their lives both now and in adulthood. We believe that appropriate teaching and learning experiences help pupils to lead happy and rewarding lives.

2 Aims and objectives

2.1 We believe that people learn best in different ways because of their learning style and special needs. At our school, we provide a rich and varied learning environments that allow all pupils to develop their skills and abilities to their full potential.

2.2 Through our teaching, we aim to:

- enable pupils to become confident, resourceful, enquiring and independent learners;
- foster pupil's self-esteem, and help them to build positive relationships with other people;
- develop pupil's self-respect, encourage them to understand the ideas, attitudes and values of others, and teach them to respect other people's feelings;

- show respect for a diverse range of cultures and, in so doing, promote positive attitudes towards other people;
- enable pupils to understand their community, and help them feel valued as part of it;
- help pupils grow into reliable, independent and positive citizens.
- embed British Values.
- prepare pupils for adulthood

3 Effective learning

- 3.1 Research tells us that people learn in many different ways, and respond best to different types of input (visual, auditory and kinaesthetic); we must therefore deliver teaching in different ways to address the needs of all our learners. We take into account the different forms of intelligence (e.g. mathematical/logical, visual/spatial, interpersonal, musical) when planning our teaching.
- 3.2 We ensure we provide the best possible environment for learning by developing a positive atmosphere in which pupils feel safe and feel they belong, in which they enjoy being challenged, but enjoy their learning, and know that they will succeed (because they know the challenge will have been set at the right level). On occasions, we play music to accompany learning, provide breaks at various points in the lesson to refocus pupil's attention (this may be 5 minutes reward time), and make sure that the pupils have access to drinking water. The learning environments at North Ridge may be very different in response to the SEN of our pupils.
- 3.3 All teaching will be structured to maximise learning opportunities, and lessons will be planned in accordance with the following principles:
- the teaching should build on previous learning ;
 - it should give pupils the 'big picture' of the lesson;
 - the teacher should explain the learning objectives, and why the lesson is important;
 - the teacher will share key words needed for their lesson; including correct subject specific language
 - the lesson should be presented in a range of styles;
 - it should develop pupils understanding and use of language encouraging recognition of key words and symbols;
 - it should allow opportunities for the pupils to build up their own understanding through various activities;
 - it should allow opportunities for the pupil to review what has been learnt;
 - it should have built-in opportunities for feedback to the pupils, celebrating success and reviewing learning strategies;
 - the teaching should indicate what the next step in the learning will be.
 - it should provide pupils with opportunities for independent learning dependant on their level of need.
- 3.4 We offer a learning environment that enables children to develop their communication skills through methods and approaches appropriate to their needs. (Effective communication may involve one or a combination of the following, speaking and listening, signing, use of PEC symbols, gestures and body language and use of ACC Augmentative and alternative communication aids.) At North Ridge, all learning environments adhere to ELKLAN guidance on visual and physical structure which supports pupils in accessing resources and learning as independently as possible.

3.5 We offer opportunities for pupils to learn in different ways. These include:

- investigation and problem-solving;
- research and discovery;
- group work;
- paired work;
- independent work;
- whole-class work;
- asking and answering questions;
- enquiry based learning
- use of ICT;
- fieldwork and visits to places of educational interest;
- creative activities;
- watching television/videos and responding to musical or recorded material;
- debates, role-plays and oral presentations;
- designing and making things;
- participation in athletic or physical activity
- opportunities to learn through sensory explorations.
- Practical work such as working in the community café and shop-, allotment, or N.M.G. hospital

3.6 We encourage pupils to take responsibility for their own learning, to be involved as much as possible in reviewing the way in which they learn, and to reflect on how they learn – what helps them learn, and what makes it difficult for them to learn. There are opportunities for purposeful practice, repetition and reinforcement of skills.

4 Effective teaching and learning

4.1 When we are teaching, we focus on motivating all pupils, and building on their skills, knowledge and understanding of the curriculum so that they reach the highest level of personal achievement. We use the school curriculum plan to guide our teaching. This sets out the aims, objectives and values of the school, and details what is to be taught to each year group. We have clear plans within each Key Stage that work on a cycle to allow for teaching mixed year group classes. All department's curriculum maps have been designed to be sequential and provide as much opportunity for pupils to use and apply understanding from one subject area to another in a cross curricular manner.

The school curriculum is developed to meet the needs of all of our pupils. We have a differentiated curriculum for each of our school departments: KS3, KS4, KS5, Experiential and 'Structured learner' pupils.

Pupils are grouped in class bases according to their age phase and their need. We describe our learners as Experiential, Structured, Supported or Independent learners. Some classes, where it is appropriate, are cross phase.

Each access or 'ability' group covers all of the National Curriculum subjects but the balance of the curriculum will vary from group to group. A personal learning profile on each pupil ensures that they learn in an environment suitable to meet their individual needs and reach maximum potential.

Experiential Learners: Students in these groups are likely to require a high level of consistent staff input to access the curriculum, and access to multisensory teaching. We have a range of specialist teaching environments to support learning for this group, including specially designed sensory resource bases. Students may require physiotherapy and / or medical input. They have access to all areas of the National Curriculum.

Structured Learners: Those pupils working within the structured curriculum have additional social communication difficulties; they need a distraction free learning environment which takes account of their need for structure and clarity. Students work in small groups with consistent staffing. Students are taught core skills (English, Mathematics, ICT and PSHE), using structured teaching approaches with an emphasis on independent working. They are taught all other subjects in the national curriculum through a theme called the 'thematic curriculum'. Where appropriate, some students are follow an individual timetable, using structured teaching. The weekly timetable offers many opportunities for physical activity including sensory integration sessions. Through the provision of a balanced curriculum within a secure, structured learning environment we seek to provide students with the social and communication support to maximise their learning.

Supported & Independent learners: These learners follow the programmes of study outlined in the new national secondary curriculum at all Key Stages. All national curriculum subjects are taught to all pupils aimed specifically at their individual needs; each pupil receives a broad, balanced, relevant and differentiated curriculum. They will have consistent staffing, but some specialist teachers for some subjects. The student groupings within each lesson are carefully planned to ensure access to appropriate resources.

Activities in KS5 reflect the age and changing needs of our post 16 students. Throughout KS5 the learning emphasis is placed on developing students' thinking skills, independence, confidence and improving their ability to apply their knowledge to situations outside school.

We also have a strong emphasis on developing employability skills through placement at our school community café and shop. Pupils will follow an individual timetable to ensure there is a balance between work experience and school based learning appropriate to the pupils need.

Within the curriculum are a wide range of opportunities for students including internal and external work experiences, partnerships with local community organizations and trips to local places of interest.

In the final year, where appropriate, pupils are based at NMG Hospital (Nightingale Class) on a supported internship programme developed and run by NRHS. They will have 3 placements in the hospital to develop employability skills. Pupils in Nightingale spend Fridays in school.

There is a focus on transition so that students move with confidence to an appropriate post school placement.

- 4.2 Teachers make ongoing assessments of each pupil's progress, and they use this information when planning their lessons. It enables them to take into account the abilities of all their pupils. Our prime focus is to develop further the knowledge and skills of all our pupils.
- 4.3 We strive to ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to each pupil's level of ability. When planning work for pupils we give due regard to information and targets contained in the pupil's Individual Education Plans (IEPs). Teachers and support staff modify teaching and learning as appropriate for each pupil's disabilities. We value each pupil as a unique

individual, and teachers are familiar with the relevant equal opportunities legislation covering race, gender and disability.

- 4.4 We will strive to meet the needs of all our pupils, and to ensure that we meet all statutory requirements related to matters of inclusion.
- 4.5 We set academic targets for the pupil in each year, and we share these targets with pupil and their parents/carers. We review the progress of each pupil at regular intervals during the year revise targets in line with assessments made.
- 4.6 We plan our lessons with clear learning objectives, learning outcomes and key vocabulary. Our lesson plans contain information about the tasks to be set, the resources needed, and the way in which we assess the pupil's work. We evaluate all lessons, so that we can modify and improve our future teaching. Teaching is planned and delivered within meaningful and purposeful contexts.
- 4.7 Each of our teachers makes a special effort to establish good working relationships with all of the pupils in their class. We treat the pupils with dignity and courtesy. We recognise that they are all individuals with different needs, but we treat them fairly, and give them equal opportunity to take part in class activities. All of our teachers follow the school policy with regard to discipline and classroom management. We all follow the school's agreed code of conduct for behaviour. We praise pupils for their efforts and, by so doing, we help to build positive attitudes towards school and learning in general. We insist on good order and behaviour at all times. When pupils misbehave, we follow the guidelines for sanctions as outlined in our policy on behaviour. Consistent approaches are used throughout the school (Team Teach, Restorative language)
- 4.8 We try to ensure that all tasks and activities that the pupils perform are safe. When we plan to take pupils out of school, we follow a strict set of procedures to ensure safety: the venue is visited, risk assessments are completed, and various permissions are obtained. We inform parents or carers, and obtain their permission, before the visit takes place.
- 4.9 We deploy Teaching Assistants and other adult helpers as effectively as possible. Sometimes, they work with individual pupils, and sometimes they work with small groups. Our adult helpers also assist with the preparation and storage of classroom equipment. We provide training and guidance to ensure they fulfil their roles very effectively.
- 4.10 Our classrooms are attractive learning environments that are well planned, clutter free and use symbols as appropriate. We change displays at least once a term, so that the classroom reflects the topics studied by the pupil. We ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to display their best work at some time during the year. All classrooms have a range of equipment and of appropriate displays relating to literacy and numeracy at the level of learning for the group. We also use displays as learning prompts for the pupils. We believe that a stimulating environment sets the climate for learning, and that an exciting classroom promotes independent use of resources, which results in high-quality work by the children.
- 4.11 All of our staff reflect on their strengths and weaknesses, and plan their professional development accordingly. We do all we can to support our staff in developing their skills, so that they can continually improve their practice.
- 4.12 We conduct all our teaching in an atmosphere of trust and respect for all.

5 Accreditation

- 5.1 All pupils will leave school with appropriate accreditation.

In KS3 pupils develop a 'Record of Achievement' which records their progress in all subjects. Evidence of learning for each new topic is added to a Record of Achievement. The evidence is presented on a standard format and can contain work samples or photographs. The evidence will show what level the pupil is working within at the time. A statement from the pupil at the bottom of the evidence describes what they have learned during the topic. Where this would be too difficult for pupils, a member of staff can advocate on the pupil's behalf and discuss it with the pupil in an appropriate way. The evidence presented in the Record of Achievement is internally moderated to ensure a good standard of presentation and clear understanding of attainment.

Pupils in Key stage 4 are studying a programme of work with a focus on achieving accreditation in a wide range of subjects. All core subjects are accredited by AQA or Pearson's Entry Level Certificates or the ASDAN Awards (Bronze and Transition Challenge). Pupils access a broad and balanced curriculum with an emphasis on developing skills for life and skills to support them in gaining future employment. All Key Stage 4 pupils choose a subject with a focus on the wider community and can choose from Duke of Edinburgh, Arts Award and Citizenship. Key Stage 4 pupils access both internal and external work experience placements to consolidate the core skills they learn in school in a different context.

In KS5 pupils study ASDAN qualifications in Personal Progress, Personal and Social Development and Employability Skills. Students follow the qualification path most suited to the level they are working at. Students also have the opportunity to work on AQA unit award scheme accreditation in English, Maths and vocational skills.

6 The role of governors

- 6.1 Our governors determine, support, monitor and review the school's approach to teaching and learning. In particular, they:
- support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by allocating resources effectively;
 - ensure that the school buildings and premises are used optimally to support teaching and learning;
 - check teaching methods in the light of health and safety regulations;
 - seek to ensure that our staff development and our performance management both promote good-quality teaching;
 - monitor the effectiveness of the school's teaching and learning approaches through the school's self-review processes, which include reports from subject leaders, the Headteacher's report to governors, review of the CPD training sessions attended by staff, attend and contribute to meetings (curriculum committee/full governors), have a link governor for each department and contribute to the school development plan.

7 The role of parents and carers

- 7.1 We believe that parents and carers have a fundamental role to play in helping children to learn. We do all we can to inform parents and carers about what and how their children are learning:
- by holding parents' evenings to explain our school strategies and discuss individual learning strategies.
 - by sending information to parents and carers, at the start of each term, which outlines the topics that the pupils will be studying during that term at school;

- by sending parents and carers reports in which we explain the progress made by each pupil, and indicate how the pupil can improve further;
- by explaining to parents and carers how they can support their children with homework.
- by inviting parents to our parents group to discuss the curriculum.
- through conversations in EHCP meetings on a yearly basis

7.2 We believe that parents and carers have the responsibility to support their children and the school in implementing school policies. We would therefore like parents and carers:

- to ensure that their child has the best attendance record possible;
- to ensure that their child is equipped for school with the correct uniform and PE kit;
- to do their best to keep their child healthy and fit to attend school;
- to inform school if there are matters outside of school that are likely to affect a child's performance or behaviour;
- to promote a positive attitude towards school and learning in general;
- to fulfil the requirements set out in the home–school agreement.

8 Monitoring and review

8.1 We are aware of the need to monitor the school's teaching and learning policy, and to review it regularly, so that we can take account of new initiatives and research, changes in the curriculum, developments in technology or changes to the physical environment of the school. We will therefore review this policy annually, or earlier if necessary.

THE FOLLOWING ARE IDEAS CREATED BY THE STAFF AT NORTH RIDGE

TOP TIPS FOR TEACHERS:

- Be prepared/ organised
- Be well resourced
- Know your pupils' levels, preferences and needs
- Build good communication with parents/ carers and treat them as partners
- Keep in mind a long term plan for the pupil
- Build confidence whenever you get the chance
- Involve pupils in decision making
- Manage staff and time effectively
- Be open and honest- ask for help when struggling
- Make planning available for T.A.s
- Get a week ahead with planning so TAs have time to read it and prepare
- Share what you want pupils to learn and not just what they are doing

- Explain key questions to TAs
- Colour code planning to pupil groups (ability)
- If you want to incorporate self -assessment use same format in the beginning/ end of assessment period
- Share good practice with other staff
- Set clear expectations for pupils and staff in your class
- Be flexible in managing your class
- Promote effective communication systems in your class
- Work as a team – know each other’s strengths and limits!!
- Discuss up-coming topics and gather ideas from the team
- Ensure there are consistent rewards and sanctions

TOP TIPS FOR TEACHING ASSISTANTS:

- Be enthusiastic
- Use you initiative to take responsibility for key tasks
- Be flexible
- Be open and honest- ask for help when struggling
- Know who to ask for advice
- Take responsibility – read planning, behaviour plans etc.
- Be organised/ manage time effectively
- Ask pupils about their learning and refer to their learning objective in a pupil friendly way
- Know key questions to ask pupils during lessons
- Know which group of pupils you are working with each lesson.
- Keep up to date with the level the pupil is working at so that questions/ prompts are pitched at the correct level
- Be confident when feeding back to teachers etc.

Policy on Teaching and Learning

- Involve pupils in decision making
- Build confidence whenever you get the chance
- Ask for clarity- there are no silly questions!
- Share good practice
- Promote good communication and systems for recording
- Feedback to all members of the team ideas to support
- Work as a team – know each other's strengths and limits!!
- Ensure there are consistent rewards and sanctions
- Inform teachers when swapping classes or change overs of any current situations regarding pupils needs or behaviour that may impact on learning.
- Keep the classroom tidy and support the teacher with filing